COT Security Alert – Microsoft Excel Vulnerability

A new vulnerability has been discovered in all versions of Microsoft Office Excel which can be exploited by opening a malicious Excel spreadsheet (.XLS) in an email attachment, or by visiting a web site that is hosting a malicious Excel spreadsheet. Successful exploitation will allow an attacker the same privileges as the logged-on user. Depending on these privileges, the attacker may execute code, install programs; view, change or delete data; or create new accounts with full user rights.

Symantec detects this as **Trojan.Mdropper.AC** and McAfee detects this as **Exploit-MSExcel.r** Trojan, and the dropped files as **BackDoor-DUE** Trojan. A Microsoft patch for this vulnerability is not available at this time.

It is recommended that administrators ensure that machines are regularly updated with the latest antivirus signatures, and that vendor patches are installed once they are fully tested. Information on the vulnerability and suggested actions can be found at
http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/advisory/968272.mspx.

Users are urged never to open attachments or follow links in emails from unknown or un-trusted sources as part of everyday practice. Users who are not confident their machines are up to date on patches or antivirus signatures should contact their administrators or contracting company.

More information may be found at http://blogs.technet.com/msrc/ and http://www.avertlabs.com/research/blog/index.php/2009/02/24/dont-post-yetnew-excel-trojans-in-the-wild/ .

NOTICE: COT is providing this information so that you are aware of the latest security threats, vulnerabilities, software patches, etc. You should consult with your network administrator or other technical resources to ensure that the appropriate actions for these alerts are followed. If you are a network administrator and need additional information, please call the Help Desk at 502.564.7576.

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